



## Five Common Reasons Christians Doubt their Salvation

| Reason   | The Doubt   | The Truth  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>#1: Fluctuating feelings</b>                | Many people experience a delighted sense of freedom and closeness with God when first understanding and embracing the good news of Jesus. Typically, however, this joy fades away. And for many that sense of God's nearness also fades away. Without these feelings to assure them, they question if anything happened at all.   | Following Christ involves learning to live by what God says is true (faith), not by what seems to be true (our feelings).<br>See Romans 1:17; 2 Corinthians 5:7; and Galatians 2:20 for more on living by faith.   |
| <b>#2: Struggles in life</b>                   | Some new Christians mistakenly assume that receiving Christ will bring an end to their worldly troubles (e.g., medical, financial, occupational, etc.). When their problems don't go away, they wonder if their salvation is real.  | Nowhere does the Bible guarantee an easy life for God's people. In fact, it suggests just the opposite is true. As C. S. Lewis said, "If you want a religion to make you feel really comfortable, I certainly don't recommend Christianity." <sup>3</sup>  |
| <b>#3: Falling back into sin or old habits</b> | Salvation (i.e., the new birth—John 3) means we receive new life, new standing with God, a new nature, a new identity, new desires, and new power. We are new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17)! And yet we still have an unredeemed human nature, we live in a fallen world filled with temptation, and our minds are not yet fully renewed. We remain vulnerable to sinful impulses. And when we yield to them, we doubt that we have become "new" at all. | Our failures don't suggest we're not believers; they indicate our continuing need for Jesus. Regret over sin and the desire to change show that you are God's child. We won't be perfect in this life (Philippians 1:6), but we can expect to make progress as we walk by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16). |
| <b>#4: Attacks by the evil one</b>             | When we stumble and fall, we hear a voice in our head that tells us "A true child of God would never do such a thing," "See there, your heart isn't really changed!" or similarly condemning statements.  | That condemning voice we hear is not God's voice—it's the voice of the enemy, Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44). Satan seizes every opportunity to attack us (Ephesians 6:16). Take up your shield of faith and ignore that voice!   |
| <b>#5: Losing sight of grace</b>               | Legalism is the devilish lie that we are responsible to live good lives and thereby "maintain our salvation." This system of "works righteousness" denies God's grace and asserts that we can earn salvation through our good deeds. When we know we haven't been good enough, we doubt our standing with God.  | The gospel of grace says that we didn't do anything to earn or deserve salvation and we can't do anything to preserve right standing with God. (Galatians 3:2-3). Instead, we trust in a grace that is freely given (Ephesians 2:8-9).   |

3 C. S. Lewis, *God in the Dock*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmann Publishing Co., 1970).